

POCAHONTAS SCHOOLS

BY G. D. McNEILL, IN THE PROGRESSIVE TEACHER.

The Editor asks that I write briefly of what he terms the "unusual progress" recently made by the schools of Pocahontas County. While I should be glad to appropriate all the honor attached to any progress made, honestly forces me to admit that a conspiracy of circumstances has enabled me to reap fields by others sown. The work accomplished by the very efficient superintendent who preceded me, the hearty co-operation of district boards of education, a sturdy and progressive people, and, above all else, a corps of loyal and energetic teachers are responsible for Pocahontas breaking into print.

Four years ago, when the writer was chosen superintendent of Pocahontas County Schools, a brief survey revealed a number of major problems. One of these concerned the high school situation. The High School Movement, sweeping West Virginia, had resulted in the erection of three costly high school buildings, designed to accommodate hundreds of students, but these schools were regarded as for town-folk and the rural communities refused to patronize them. The three schools, supposed to draw from nine hundred square miles of country, enrolled less than 150 pupils, and seventy per cent of these were from town schools. The graduates from the elementary schools in rural communities must be brought to high school. The actual attendance in the elementary schools was little more than half the enumeration. The attendance in the elementary schools must be increased.

The consolidation movement already begun was far from a satisfactory finish. According to the requirements prescribed by the State Department of Schools, the county did not contain a single Standard School Building. Something must be done in the direction of standardization.

The public did not give the schools enthusiastic support, because the mass of the people knew little of what the schools were attempting to do. A more general knowledge of the educational situation was needed. The public must be induced to give attention to the schools.

And finally, few of the one hundred seventy teachers had professional training, and most of them showed little inclination to strive for this training. Furthermore, these teachers were scattered along a hundred mile stretch of mountainous country over an area about three-fourths that of Rhode Island. There were no district supervisors, nor was it possible to provide funds with which to employ district supervisors. For a county superintendent, with his many duties to attempt a school-to-school supervision under such circumstances was clearly a waste of time. Here then, arose the great problem the problem upon which the other problems depended. Since supervision was impossible, efficient teaching must be had without supervision. The personnel of the teaching force must be improved, and teachers must regard themselves as real folk rather than as drudges. The initial step toward

teacher improvement was rather militant. The County Institute was organized as a permanent Teacher's Association, and a county-wide educational campaign was inaugurated. Faculty members from some of the state normal schools volunteered their services; local ministers, lawyers, merchants, editors, teachers, farmers and bankers went from community to community, and engaged actively in the campaign, the speakers paying their own expenses.

The aim was to hold at least one of these meetings within reach of each patron. Better teachers, better salaries, and State Aid were emphasized. Hundreds of patrons and taxpayers attended the meetings, and when the next legislature convened petitions, containing thousands of names, were presented, demanding the enactment of more progressive school laws. Meanwhile, the agitation for new school laws was statewide, and the legislature enacted the desired laws.

With State Aid and increased salaries, the elimination of the undesirable teacher began. It was made clear that teachers who could not teach, and teachers who would not do their best, were undesirable and a permanent menace to the well being of the desiring teachers. The idea that "God helps those who help themselves" was emphasized. In all teacher's meetings it was made clear as possible that the teachers must make good; and that they, more than all other factors combined, were responsible for the well-being of themselves and their country. The result of this effort was satisfactory. In 1919, five per cent of the county teachers attended summer schools. In 1922, sixty per cent attended summer schools, and at present a score or more are doing extension work with accredited colleges. A few worthless teachers remain, but they are seeking other employment. They understand that they must do real teaching or abandon the profession. Ninety per cent of the teachers are conscientious workers, and most of them have some professional training. They are striving to improve their teaching ability and the educational standing of the county.

And, though a platitude, it is in the spirit of service and loyalty that the great secret of successful work in education lies. The school official, the educational system, or the people, striving for educational achievement, without first enlisting a loyal group of energetic teachers, will not go far. With such a corps of teachers, few achievements are impossible.

When the support of an energetic teaching force was secured, the remaining problems became less formidable. Any educational enterprise that is worth while will receive support from the public, provided the public knows that the enterprise is worth while.

A campaign of this "fact advertising" was undertaken in order to increase high school attendance. A column of "School News" was carried by the county paper; grade teachers were expected to see to it that their graduates entered high school meetings were held in schools having, eighth-grade classes, and these pupils were encouraged to enter high school and graduates from the elementary schools were assembled along with their parents at the

high schools, where appropriate exercises were held and diplomas presented. On such occasions, the teachers and students of the high schools entertained the graduates and patrons. Prospective graduates and patrons were shown about the buildings and were made to see that the high school had something to offer. In order to make a more direct appeal to the agricultural districts, vocational agriculture courses of study, under the supervision of Smith-Hughes teachers, were established in the high schools and with the assistance of the county agent and farm bureau, 4-H Clubs were organized throughout the county. The procedure outlined filled the high schools to overflowing within two years. The problem now is how to get funds with which to erect additional high school buildings. In order to provide accommodations for the students, two junior "highs" have been established, and the regular high school buildings are being enlarged as rapidly as funds permit. And as a direct result of this higher education movement, the county has within the last two years sent more of her young people to colleges than were sent in the fifty years preceding.

The problem of attendance in the elementary schools has not been solved so completely. Without any increase in the number of children enumerated, the attendance in the elementary schools has increased twenty per cent since 1920, but we still have failed to reach about one-fifth of our children, and these, as a rule, are the children of poor parents, who, above all others, should have an education. The increase noted in the percentage of attendance is due largely to the efforts of the teachers. They are expected to do everything possible to get the children to school and to keep them there. Attendance officers are required to give patrons a fair deal, but when it becomes apparent that a patron is trying to evade the law, he is prosecuting. Care is taken in the selection of attendance officers. He must be very firm and very dignified. He should, at least, have such qualifications as would render him fit for satisfactory service as Minister to Turkey at the present time.

Consolidation is not always feasible in a mountain country where the roads are bad and the snows deep. However, we have a number of consolidated schools. In almost every instance, these schools have better attendance and better morale than the one-room schools.

The progress along the line of standardization was practically forced by a recent law by which a bonus is given to such schools. Though the local boards of education are not compelled to standardize any schools, it is evident that postponement of such improvements only augments the burdens of the future. After going over the various phases of the bonus provision, the school authorities determined that all new buildings must be standardized, and that the best of the existing buildings must be remedied and made standard just as rapidly as funds become available. Pursuant to this policy, six consolidated elementary schools, totaling thirty-seven rooms have been standardized within the present year. Others are undergoing repair, while one new eight-room standard building is nearing completion. In all these standardization projects, an effort was made to secure the co-operation of the patrons. A good building is a great asset, but the fact that the patrons have an interest in the building is a greater asset. In a few instances, some people in the very community in which the building was located opposed standardization, but usually the patrons were willing to co-operate. In one instance the Women's Club donated playground equipment valued at three hundred dollars. This attempt at providing proper school buildings has demonstrated conclusively that, without great natural resources, it is impossible for a sparsely settled county to finance an adequate building program.

Because most children in the rural districts bring cold lunches to school, a Hot Lunch Campaign was put on. The teachers met in district institutes and the State Department of Schools furnished expert demonstrators of the Hot Lunch idea. Following this a number of teachers arranged to provide hot lunches in their schools. By way of incentive for those to follow, a Hot Lunch Honor Roll is carried in the county newspaper.

Manuals of Physical Education are furnished by the State Department of Schools. These manuals were distributed and their use demonstrated at the county institute. About sixty per cent of the schools now give some attention to physical education, and it is hoped to make this one hundred per cent before the close of the year. Along with physical education came the "talking machine." Many schools have arranged to purchase phonographs so as to better give Camp's "Daily Dozen."

Three years of supervision has revealed another situation not listed as an initial problem. Results obtained in the various schools were observed to be distressingly unequal. Some communities have splendid school spirit, while other communities give no attention to education; some teachers are progressive, while others are "non pep"; the students in some schools are active, alert, and quick minded, while students in other schools are partial to mental and physical calm.

As the initial step it is planned to bring all the schools together about the close of the year, in a District School Day. The State Department is sponsoring this project and has rendered valuable assistance in the preparation of the program. Every effort will be made to bring the "grown

CIRCUIT COURT

Chancery Orders

R. C. Miller vs. W. O. Simmons and others, sale confirmed to W. M. Simmons.

H. H. Bostic and others vs. Harry Bostic and others, disbursements of funds.

L. M. McClintic appointed Divorce Commissioner in the stead of W. A. Bratton, resigned.

Financial report of Uriah Bird, commissioner of school lands filed.

D. C. Adkison, guardian v. Jacob Frank Moore, settled.

Andrew Price, trustee v. I. Rosen and others, decree of sale.

Report of Uriah Bird, School commissioner, of lands liable to be sold for benefit of school purposes.

C. J. Richardson, E. M. Snyder, Uriah Bird, G. F. Crummett, N. C. McNeil, W. A. Eskridge, John Waugh, W. J. Yeager, and A. E. Smith appointed trustees of Marlinton Methodist Church.

State v. 345 1/2 acres of John T. McGraw, F. P. Marshall allowed to redeem.

State v. 197 acres of Deer Creek land, Deer Creek Lumber Company allowed to redeem.

State v. Nettingham land, school commissioner directed to institute suit to sell.

State v. Nellie Simmons, land redeemed.

Law Orders

Grand Jurors: Auburn Friel, Frank R. Hunter, E. N. Moore, H. H. Waugh, W. J. Hebb, R. C. May, Fred Gwinn, Coo Beverage, Walter Grimes, H. W. Harper, E. H. Adkison, Henry Shinaberry, W. W. Kenison, Gravel Gimes, A. J. Sharp, Howard Buzzard.

State v. Arlie Simmons, guilty, paroled.

Grand jury finished its labors Thursday morning. For felonies there were 10 indictments returned, and 30 indictments for misdemeanor.

State v. John Hatfield, \$300 fine and two years in the penitentiary.

State v. Joe Arbogast, guilty, \$50 and three months in jail.

State v. William Castel, indicted, dismissed, defendant dead.

Rule entered against Axel Lantz, and D. W. McCarty for non appearance before grand jury.

Regular April term convenes on April 3rd.

ANOTHER DESIRE TO COOPERATE

Dear Editor: I wish to say that I heartily coincide with X which is trying to cooperate with the Hill Point Correspondent about these things and matters of Education how true it is that we need our Sons & Daughters in the hot setzins of the year when there is both diggin and hoing to be done, & now they cant get no solid learning anyhow. When I went to school as doubtless did X likewise I 4 Mo school and hard benches we learnt more actual Spelling & Grammar & like sich than all these newfangled fellers does (and Thirdly) let me say again that I coincide and cooperate in these matters. No wonder their is Tuberculosis raging abroad and up and down this great land of ours when the School Winders is raised from the top and cold air all the time poring in and dismilitating around over the scholars insted of having the winders shut and and being more economical of the wood we Taxpayers is providing. Lets have 4mo school on the solid foundation of good fligering, good Spelling, good Gramer & Harvays Old arth metick. yours for good Schools & more closer cooperashin XX.

Judge C. R. Mathews, late of Helena, Nebraska, passed away at the home of Capt. J. W. Mathews, at 8 o'clock a. m. March 8, 1923, aged 85 years, 11 months and 27 days. He was an invalid the last few years of his life and a great sufferer with catarrh of the throat and stomach. He was a Pocahontas boy—born at Cloverlick, and so was his brother, Capt. J. W. Mathews. M.

Noel Wheeler cut his knee badly with an axe, while working on the Flynn job in Bath County. He is at his fathers home near Marlinton.

The four-year old daughter, of McKinley Waugh is sick of bronchial pneumonia.

DRINK

Sassafras Tea

It is delicious and refreshing and a good spring tonic and blood purifier. Selected Sassafras Bark, packed by

GREER, GREER & GREER

FOR SALE BY

YOUR DRUGGISTS

OR GROCER

GOES TO PEN

John Hatfield confessed to the crime of moonshining and was sentenced to two years in the penitentiary and to pay a fine of \$300, by Judge Sharp at a special term of the Circuit Court last week. Hatfield is a man of middle age, who came here from Virginia about a year ago.

William Alexander Varner died at his home on Elk, March 9, 1923, after a short illness of pneumonia. For some years his health has not been the best. He was 73 years old, having been born December 27, 1849. Burial at the Varner graveyard on Sunday morning, the services being conducted by his pastor, Rev. O. N. Miles of the Presbyterian Church. Mr. Varner was one of the best citizens of Pocahontas county, and a man widely known and respected. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mary Gibson Varner, and their two children, Mrs. Charles G. McGuire and Harry Varner. He was a son of the late John Varner and his wife, Mrs. Isabel Hannah Varner.

John Paul Simmons, a Marlinton school boy, has rigged himself up a wireless telephone outfit that works to perfection. He started on it last summer and after months of tireless experiment, he is now able to pick up messages from the four corners of the county. Each night the air is full of radio concerts, speeches, sermons and whatnot. If you don't like the Pittsburgh program, turn the thing mabob, and you are receiving from another station. These home-made outfits are inexpensive and any bright boy can rig one up.

Fine lots of brook trout were put in Stone and Swago Creeks last week by the State Game Commission. Shipments are expected for Williams River, Elk, Cheat and the head of Greenbrier. The Commission expects to plant a million or more trout in the streams of the state, and the fine trout streams of the county will get their proportionate part. These trout are hatched for the Commission at the Government hatchery at White Sulphur Springs.

Dogs have been making raids on the sheep of the farmers nearby to Marlinton. A number of sheep have been killed, and at least three dogs have come up missing. So pestiferous have the dogs become that a number of farmers have warned their neighbors to keep their dogs tied as dogs running loose without people with them will be killed at sight.

MARLINTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Harvey H. Orr, Pastor.
9:45 a. m. Sunday School.
11:00 a. m. Morning Worship
2 p. m. Every Member Canvass
7:00 p. m. Christian Endeavor
7:30 p. m. Preaching.
Next Sunday afternoon is the time for the Every Member Canvass.

MARLINTON METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Fred B. Wyand, Pastor
Sunday School 9:45 a. m.
A. S. Overholt, Supt.
11 o'clock, Morning Worship;
Sermon subject: "What is the Matter With the Church Members of Today."
7:00 p. m. Epworth League.
7:45 p. m. evening service.

The Overcomers Class, taught by Mrs. Wyand, will have a home made candy sale on Saturday March 17 at 2:30 p. m. at C. J. Richardson's store.

WESLEY CHAPEL M. E. SOUTH

Hillsboro, West Virginia
W. Clark Early, Pastor.
9:45 a. m. Sunday School
11:00 a. m. Country Life Conference, Union service at Seebert, by Rev. A. H. Rapping.
2:00 p. m. Union Service, State Commissioner Brown and others
7:30 p. m. Conference Union Service, by Rev. A. H. Rapping.

On account of the conflict with the Country Life Conference the adjourned session of the fourth quarterly conference of the Hillsboro charge has been postponed again till 2 p. m. Saturday March 24.

"THE FOUR HORSEMEN" SMASHES ALL RECORDS

The long-awaited Rex Ingram production of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" is coming to the Amusu Theatre beginning April 5th. This is the picture that cost Metro \$1,000,000 to make, and from all accounts the \$1,000,000 was well spent as critics agree that all other efforts at production on a grand scale have been surpassed and record runs have been made in New York, Chicago, Boston, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Los Angeles and other cities where the picture has been previously shown.

Fifty principals and 2,500 extras were engaged in the filming of the photodrama, an entire French village and an elaborate chateau were erected to be destroyed under artillery bombardment.

The appeal of the story itself has already been proved through the success of the novel by Vicente Blasco Ibanez, upon which the photodrama is founded.

The cast includes Rodolph Valentino and Alice Terry. The scenario was written by Juna Mathis, John Seltz was responsible for the photography and the technical directors were Amos Myers and Joseph Calder. Walter Mayo was assistant to Rex Ingram.

What Do You Pay For Flour?

Are you buying it at the best possible price?

If you are not, do you think you are treating yourself right? We are headquarters for flour and feeds of all kinds.

Spring Wheat Flour
Kansas Hard Wheat Flour
Soft Winter Wheat Flour

Straight Grade Flour and Self Rising Flour

You will do well to investigate our prices and quality

Peoples Store & Supply Co.

MARLINTON, W. VA.

EDUCATIONAL NOTES

BY G. D. McNEILL, CO. SUPT.

It is learned with much pleasure and apprehension that House Bill 223 is to be amended. John is welcome to any aid I gave in the way of calling his attention to the fifty thousand dollar "ambiguity." The fact appears to be that John is not wholly responsible for the business. He secured the services of a part time secretary, and this unidentified Boswell, desiring to avoid deep thought, copied an antiquated statute, some parts of which had long since been repealed by more modern school laws. This foreign matter, while giving portliness and rotundity to the bill, imparted a disconcerting twist after the fashion of a boozarang. The nature of the amendment is not known. Its effect will depend upon where it was secured. If it was taken from Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, all may yet be well, but if another cross section was taken from some code of laws, the last agony may be worse than the first.

All persons having claims against the Boards of Education should present them. It is very necessary that a close check be kept on the school funds so that proper data may be submitted in making application for more State Aid. A large account held up until the last of the year might find the fund exhausted. Measles, diphtheria, and flu are prevalent, and have seriously affected the school attendance. Several schools have been closed by the health or school authorities. It is the law that the teacher receives pay for time lost in this way. Unless the situation clearly requires the closing of the school, it should not be closed. It is not proper to close a school just because that might be a bit more convenient.

The Echols Construction company was awarded a Class A road contract in Boone county last week by the State Road Commission.

The roads in March are just a little worse than usual, owing to heavy frosts and rains.

The revival meeting at Campbelltown closed Tuesday night.

HOSPITAL NOTES

Miss Helen Hebb was operated on for appendicitis and is doing nicely. Truman Mace is at the Institute for treatment.

Deibert Gabbert, who was so desperately ill, is recovering. Oliver Adkins has recovered from pneumonia and is soon to return home.

Miss Virginia Hickman was a guest at the Institution last week. Horace Lockridge was in a few day with a very bad cold.

Mrs. Floyd Brill attended the meeting at Campbelltown two nights last week.

Waugh Brothers are moving in their roadmaking outfit preparing to go to work on the Price Hill Class A road. They expect to complete the contract in four months.

WEEKLY PROGRAM

AMUSU THEATRE

WED. and THURSDAY—
Enid Bennett in "Her Husband's Friend," and Selznick News.

FRIDAY—
Pearl White in "Broadway Peacock," and Buffalo Bill chapter play. See Sitting Bull and his Sioux warriors prepare for battle. See Confederate outriders near Fort Kearney.

SATURDAY—
Colleen Moore in "Come on Over" and Larry Seamon in "The Sultan."

MONDAY and TUESDAY—
Colleen Moore in "The Wall Flower."

Watch for the following big attractions—
"Dangerous Curve Ahead"
"The Storm"
"Four Horsemen"
"In the Name of the Law"—this picture running in Charleston this week.
"The Ninety and Nine."
"Nanook of the North."



You owe yourself

a new Stetson

WINTER plays hobb with a man's hat—it's the season when there is a call to heavy duty for every headpiece. No doubt your hat has served you well, but it's dress-up time now—the time to brighten up with a Stetson—styled for young men.

The hat you want is here, just waiting for you to select it.

The Value Store

A. S. Overholt & Son

Opposite Postoffice

Marlinton, W. Va.

P. S.—Those to whom we have extended credit will please settle their accounts prompt.

FOR SALE BY

YOUR DRUGGISTS

OR GROCER